1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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was a game which they encouraged. A lad of about thirteen collected some green leaves and tied them together with creeper, then taking an arrow, a toy *mastiya*, and a broken gourd tied with creeper, which hung over his arm, for a *maludewa*, he set fire to the leaves and climbed the ladder[1]. While lowering the smoker and letting the smoke blow into the crevice in the rock where the comb was supposed to be, he pretended to cut round its sides with an arrow and thrust at it with his *mastiya* (figure 3), from which he transferred the honey into the gourd. As he descended from the ladder he beat his chest and sides as though driving off the bees, and directly he reached the ground rushed into the jungle to escape from them, all the smaller children imitating him with great glee. Obviously this was a well-known and favourite game, for even the elders took part in it, throwing their cloths over their heads and running into the jungle.

At Henebedda (which we visited before Pihilegodagalge) there were no children present when we spoke about honey getting, but four young men were eager to show us how it was done and acted the scene with great spirit. They took from our camp a piece of white and a piece of brown paper, and fastened them with some wax to the roof of their cave, then as there was no tree above the cave around which to fasten a creeper, one man crouched on the top of the rock and held the ends of the ladder in his hands, another stood above and lowered a smoker of green leaves while a third climbed the ladder and collected the honey from the white paper and the grubs from the brown. Afterwards the collector divided the spoil equally and amid much laughter they all sat down and pretended to eat, one actually going through the pantomime of washing his hands after the meal. They eat the grubs as well as the honey.

As regards clothing, pedlars have brought them cloth for so long that no Vedda living knows what was done when they could not buy it, but it is generally stated that they made bark

[1] The *maludewa* is the vessel made of dammbala in which honey should be collected and the *mastiya* the wooden four-pronged implement with which the comb is broken up and transferred to the *maludewa*. For figures of *maludewa* and *mastiya*, see Plate LXV and figure 3 (p. 93) respectively.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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cloth of the *riti* (*Antiaris innoxia*) of which material the Sinhalese still make rice bags. Men wear a rag of "white" cotton about 9 inches wide passed between their legs, and held in place by each end being passed over a waist string. This cotton material they prefer to anything else for two reasons, firstly, it very soon becomes a dull brown, and hence is less obvious when hunting than a coloured cloth would be, secondly, it is thin machine-made material from which they can easily tear narrow strips for tinder, when they make fire. The women wear coloured cotton cloth of the kind that is woven at Batticaloa, it is a strong material and is not easily torn. A single width forms the length of their skirt from waist to knee and is fastened round their waists like a sarong. Thus, the men's preference for "white" and the women's for coloured cloth is purely economical, depending on the kind of material it has been the pedlar's habit to bring. These pedlars visit the wilder Veddas once a year after the honey collecting season; they never approach the caves, but when within about a quarter of a mile of them they shout till a Vedda comes to them, then they expose their wares and the Vedda returns to the cave to fetch as many pots and gourds of honey and as much dried flesh as he is willing to exchange. The "silent trade," mentioned by Knox[1], is now a legend among the Sinhalese of which no tradition lingers among the Veddas. We have Bailey's evidence that it had ceased before 1863, and the old Kandyan we met (see p. 31) remembered it only as a tradition in the days of the rebellion in 1818. They are not now, nor have they been for very long, so shy as to be prevented from bartering freely enough

Fig. 2. Toy stone-bow, $\frac{1}{4}$ (about).

[1] Cf. p. 6.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-8 (1907-1908) 1911
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resin obtained from the *timbiri* tree (*Dipterys zeylanica*). The shaft of the arrow is commonly made of the wood of the *welan* tree (*Pterospermum subrifolium*). The arrow is still the almost universal cutting tool, as we had good opportunity of ascertaining at Henebedda. There was no knife in the community, and we noticed the skill with which a deer was skinned and cut up with an arrow. The Veddas certainly desired no better tool, and when we pressed a butcher's knife on one of them in order to see how he would handle the unaccustomed tool, it was interesting to note how slowly he worked and how poor the result was compared with that he obtained with an arrow, which he held just above the blade somewhat as a European holds a penholder. No less astonishing was the skill employed in removing the skull cap with a few strokes of the axe, not only was the brain lifted out and cooked entire, but it was removed so neatly and cleanly that the result was more suggestive of an anatomical preparation than a piece of butcher's work.

The Veddas we met were all bad or indifferent shots, and we have no doubt that game is seldom shot at a distance much beyond fifteen or twenty yards, the marvellous stalking of the Veddas enabling them to approach within this distance. The bow, to which the string is securely fastened at one end, is carefully unstrung when not in use. To string it, this end is placed upon the ground, the upper end of the shaft and the string being held in the hands, the sole of one foot is then placed against the middle of the shaft which is steadied, we might almost say gripped, between the great toe and the second toe. Much of the weight of the body is thrown against the middle of the shaft while the hands pull down the upper end to which the string is quickly secured, as is shown in Plate LXIII. Plate LXIV shows the position of the hands and arms immediately before the arrow is released. The bowman is Handuna of Henebedda, who is left-handed and who in spite of being the father of a large family remains the only left-handed individual in the community. The length of a bow collected at Henebedda was 172 cm., while four arrows also obtained at Henebedda varied from 88 to 105 cm. in length.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
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element as they are in the midst of a civilised crowd. They are different beings at ease in their own forests. I have travelled by night with Veddahs for my guides over the plains and through the forests of Bintenne, and have been struck with their altered demeanour. In their own hunting grounds, they are no longer the scared and cowering creatures I have described. They are "at home;" and seem to assert their freedom. Bows in hand, their axes hanging from their shoulders, they stride noiselessly along, with head erect, and independent air as though they were every one's equal, and had none to fear.

As their chief pursuit is hunting, whether for game or honey, their constant weapons, without which they never stir, are a bow, two or three arrows, and a very small axe (for cutting honey-combs out of trunks of trees), shaped with a hollow in the lower part of the blade to enable it to hang conveniently upon the shoulder. They also carry a larger axe, stuck into the waist-string at their back.

The bow is long, from five feet eight to about six feet six inches in length, rudely made of tough elastic wood*—a bow, which a muscular Englishman would bend with an effort, long practice has taught the slightly-built Veddah to string with ease; and I have seen a boy use a bow which caused me some exertion to bend. The strings, which are exceedingly strong, are twisted of different kinds of bark and fibres.† The arrows, which are about a yard long, are headed with a sharp iron blade, often nearly six inches long and an inch wide, about the formation of which they are still as "curious" as when Knox wrote of them, and if a blade be given them, they will now, as they did then, grind or beat it out to the shape and thinness they most approve.‡

The method in which "they bespeak their arrows to be made," and their mode of barter generally, which Tennent believes still to exist among them, have long been exploded.§ They are not

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* They chiefly use the wood of the following trees, doonoomadala (*stereospermum chelonoides*), the kekala (*cynthocalyx zeylanicus*), a creeper called kobbéwel, or the pandéro tree.

† Chiefly the fibre of the niyanda (*sansiviera zeylanica*), and the bark of a creeper called the areloowel.

‡ "They are so curious of their arrows that no smith can please them. The king once to gratify them for a great present they brought him, gave all of them his best made arrow-blades, which nevertheless would not please their humour. For they went all of them to a rock by a river, and ground them into another form." Knox, part iii, chap. i, p. 63 (folio).

§ "It hath been reported to me by many people, that a wilder sort of them, when they want arrows, will carry their loads of flesh in the night; and hang it up in a smith's shop, also a leaf cut in the form they will have their arrows made and hang by it; which if the smith do make according to their pattern, they will requite, and bring him more flesh; but if he make

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
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English.	Veddah.	Singhalese.	Remarks.
Elephant	Botah kandah Mólah	Alya, or ota (tusks)	"Kandah" (Singh.), a hill or mountain. "Mólah" (Singh.), the thick heavy black pounder used as a pestle in pounding rice—an allusion, probably, to his trunk. The Batticalao Veddahs say "ut-botah" and "cotah bebéla".
Monkey	Patagaha-poocka	Wandura, or rilawa	
Porcupine	Nittawe	Ittawe	
Pengolin (*manis pentadactyla*)	Gal gawra	Kaballiya	
Iguana	Moondé	Talagoya	Called by the Veddahs of Batticalao "goya", "goy-botah", and "hellá".
Lizard	Cat-tombá	Hoona	
Snake	Polongoo	Sarpaya	"Polongo", a very venomous snake. The Batticalao Veddahs call a snake "sarra-botah".
Snail	Tombé	Golu bellá	
A bird	Sappoo Chappoo Sattriayo	Kurulla	In the Assamese and Bengali dialects, birds are called "charai" and "chiriya".
A crow	Kalu eka	Kaká	"Kalu" (Singh.), black, "eka", one.
To walk	Mangwettinawa, mittiganawa	Æwadinawa	"Maga" (Singh.), a road; "wettenawa" (do.), to fall; "mittiya" (do.), a hammer; "gahanawa" (do.), to strike.
To jump	Bota damanawa	Paninawa	"Bota" (Singh.), the neck; "damanawa" (do.), to place.
To shoot (with bow & arrow)	Pennagatcha	Widinawa	
To rain	Diya pompanawa	Wahinawa	
To drink	Diya kanawa	Bónawa	"Diya-kanawa", to eat water—not an uncommon expression among the Kandyans.
To eat	Kapat ennawa	Kanawa	
To speak	Katan kiyanawa, & banawanawa	Kiyanawa and kata-karanawa	
To call	Killápeh	Andaganawa	
To see	Reviga	Dakenawa	
To die	Miyoona Miya pérélígé	Marenawa	"Miyoona" (Singh.), dead; "miya" (do.), dead; "miya pereliya", dead and gone.
To sleep	Nidanawa	Nidaganawa	
I am hot	Raddaguna		
I am cold	Bopati sitaganawa		

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
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Equally they were acquainted with tobacco and betel, for I was shown a place where the Veddas established a toll that was paid usually in these particular commodities. 276 [651]

The dog was the only domestic animal reared by the Vedda, and special names were given to these pets. 231 552

The Veddas appeared to have no knowledge of melting iron for the manufacture of their particular implements, which consisted of the bow and arrow, the spear, and the small axe, or hatchet. Arrow and spear-heads were procured by barter; the method of procedure was to clear a small space round the foot of a tree by the wayside leading to a village known to contain smiths. Here the Vedda would hang up to the branch of a tree a vessel containing honey, or a piece of meat, which would be taken by the smith, who in return would hang up an arrow-head. 411 412 326 439

It was understood by both that the quantity or number of articles required would be represented by the number of parcels of meat or honey. Should the smith, however, take the meat and not leave the arrow-heads that were thus silently requisitioned, he would pay the penalty with his life, or some of his animals would be shot by the defrauded Vedda. [628]

The bow was usually made from the wood of the Dunumadala (*Stereospermum chelonioides*) and of the Bignoniaceæ. It was not always of the same length, as this appears to have depended on the springiness of the wood. The arrow was generally about 4 ft. long, or as much as a man could draw the bow to. The arrow-head appears to have been small, large arrow-heads being for ceremonial purposes only. 411 [824]

Fire was obtained by spinning, under moderate pressure, a vertical rod of Welanga wood (*Pterospermum suberifolium*) on a flat piece of wood of the same species, with the point of the former surrounded by floss, or some quickly inflammable material. Later, the flint and steel were found more effective. One example of a flint and steel was shown to me at Panawa, and I tried to purchase it at the owner's valuation, but I found he was most reluctant to sell. I understood that the flint and steel, a lock of hair, and a fragment of cloth represented a title deed, these being given by a dying man to his heir, or adopted heir, as a mode or evidence of transfer. 372 [824] 423 428

We had hardly gained the base of the rock when we heard human voices and soon came up with three men and their dogs. One fellow carried a gun, the others had axes hitched to their shoulders. They were on their way to a devil dancing ceremony at a house of illness some miles away; but abandoning their project they accompanied us to their homes.

In a small clearing stood half a dozen leafy shelters. Outside one of these, three women with infants at the breast were seated roasting small yellow flowers. The rest of their people were at work on a *chena** close by. We summoned them and soon we had all the Veddas of the *Kosgaha Ulpotta* before us—some six or eight men and about a dozen women and children. They were a poor lot bearing the stigmata of malaria and framboesia. There was but one old man among them. The children were emaciated and languid.

Most of them showed strong traces of Tamil admixture, especially the women; what poor ornaments they wore, their clothing, and even their very names were Tamil; and so were their predilections if the coy smiles one or two of them bestowed on the fine Tamil that accompanied us signified anything. There were at least three men, however, true to Vedda type—short of stature, wild-eyed, with beardless face and upstanding frizzly hair.

They had no bows among them, except as playthings for the children, but made us one as a memento and stained it with charcoal and *thimbiri* to give it the appearance of use.

The huts were fashioned of wattle and leaves, and thatched with dry grass. Their domestic appointments comprised earthen pots, a wooden pestle and mortar, bark rope, and a deer skin or two.

Fruits, flowers, wild yams, honey, the flesh of animals, *kurrukhan*† and maize formed their food. The meat they fancied most was that of the langur and monitor lizard which they hunted with the lazy mongrels that loitered about. They eat abundantly and at any hour when food is plentiful; but as a rule one good meal a day is all they expect; in times of dearth they bear hunger stoically, chewing incessantly a few varieties of bark they carry in pouches fashioned of cloth saturated with melted wax (*itee reithee*). Partial nomads, they spend many months of the year under trees and in caves. Where the *palu*, *veera*, *kong*, or *mora*‡ fruit is ripe, where the hives are, there they take their women and children, dogs, and chattels and go.

"How often do you bathe?" I asked one of them, the smell of their ring-wormed bodies suggesting little acquaintance with water.

"What bathing for us," he replied. "We fall into a stream once in a way and get out again; that is our bath. And we only do that when our stomachs are full. When we are hungry we don't care for anything; we can eat even a man then!"

In answer to the question how they measured distances and what constituted a mile, the reply was, "We walk till our legs hurt, then we place our axes on the ground, sit down, take out our pouches, and chew a quid; that is our mile".

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*A patch of forest cleared for cultivation

†*Eleusine coracana*

‡*Minusops hexandra, Hemicyclia sepiaria, Schleichera trijuga, Nephelium longana*, respectively.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

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A Vedda home of the Ulpotta. (Page 8)

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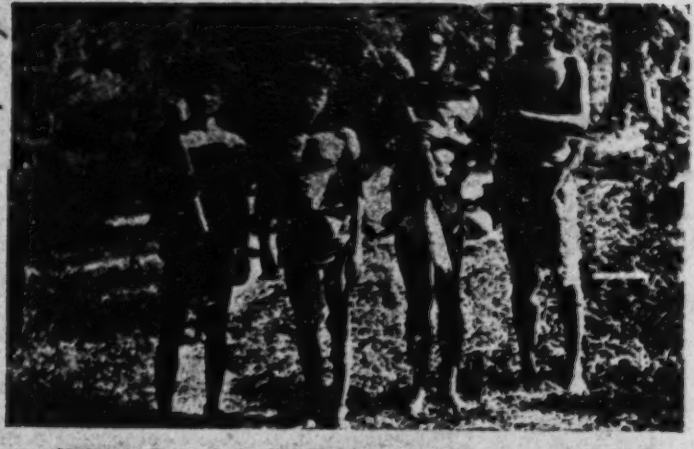

Veddas at Gunner's Quoin. The two to the left (Vela and Sinna) are the most typical. (Page 8)

[facing p. 8]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

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[412,
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The best of the Henebedda Veddas—Puranala and Handuna (Page 16)

Handuna strings his bow (Page 16)

[facing p. 16]

5: Spinel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

and ear-rings and necklaces. Sober, wistful children ate raw melons or fragments of *kurrukkan* cake as hard as brick, plastered over with flies.

Indian corn and *kurrukkan*, the staple food of these people, are prepared in a variety of ways. After soaking in water for twenty-four hours, they are reduced to flour, *kurrukkan* on grind-stones, maize with pestle and mortar, and eaten in one of three forms—*talapa*, *roti*, or *pittu* appetised with pungent sambols.

Let us look into one of their homes. It is windowless and dark, except for the light that comes between the bark-slats in a hundred dazzling shafts. There are two rooms; the inner small and narrow, the outer a larger living room with a single doorway protected by a two foot fence—a provision for the children. At one corner is a hearth underlying a low trestle bridging the wall angle, for drying flesh; at another a cage-work containing earthen pots and garish Allervale cups and plates. Hanging about the walls are rolled mats, oil bottles, baskets and clusters of sheathed corn cobs. Head-high is an open ceiling containing a jumble of things such as an old umbrella, wicker baskets, large earthen pots and gourds. On the floor is a large grind-stone, and littered about are shreds of mats, a deer skin or two, dirty cloths, a small pillow, a betel bag, a rush broom and a polished plank—certainly the most primitive chair imaginable. There is also a coconut-scraper of curious design, made of a serrated iron disc wedged into the outstanding limb of a triple-branched stem resting on its Y-shaped arms. Such are the appointments of a *chena* Vedda's domicile.

These communal dwellings stockaded against beast aggression in the heart of wild nature, the watch huts on the trees, the hallos all night, proclaim the incessant struggle between man and the animals in whose strong kingdom he is only a small unit. But for its inalienable hardships the life of this people makes a homely appeal to the human heart. Nature a capricious giver, bestows now abundantly now sparingly, and he who would wrest a living from her must have supple thews and great endurance.

Henanagalla was a place of antiquarian interest a few miles from Dolagalwella. On the summit of a large low rock in an undulating glade stood a broken dagaba completely obscured by a growth of big trees and scrub. Desultory worshippers had trussed up a slab for offerings of wild flowers. A low wall of hewn granite blocks surrounded the structure, and a half buried monolith or two peeped out of the ruin.

Descending from here and working round through a tangle of brush-wood, we came to a commodious cave quite forty paces long, showing the remains of enclosing and partitioning walls, a slotted stone for the support of a pillar and a large flat *puja* stone.

Besides these evidences of ancient occupation, were signs of more recent use. The cave was obviously a resort of monitor hunters. There were the long sticks with which the savoury creatures had been poked out of deep lairs, and cooking frames where they had been roasted. The floor was littered with their dry heads, corn-cobs and nut-shells.

But more interesting than all this were the crude drawings that adorned the inner dome. Here was a veritable gallery of untutored art, wrought with finger for brush and a mixture of ash and water for paint. There were the most primitive representations imaginable of leopards, elephants

5: Spitzel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

with men astride them, bows fitted with tridentate arrows, and all manner of cabalastic signs. Many an interesting discovery awaits here the spade of the antiquary. 172

How different is the appeal of ruins buried in the remote forest, in the setting with which Time and Nature have invested them, from those set out in the trim nudity of archaeologic display with tourist-ridden roads leading up to them.

Leaving Dolagalwella we turned up north, and soon entered the first of a series of great parklands we were now to traverse. These fine shooting grounds were probably centuries ago flourishing fields of paddy, fed by large artificial tanks, the crumbling embankments of which often outlie the glades. This is why, perhaps, the best game country in Ceylon to-day is to be found in the precincts of old kingdoms such as those of Polonnaruwa, Anuradhapura and Tissamaharama. 000

We had put up for the night on a river bed many miles from the nearest settlement, when, to our surprise, a man armed with bow and arrows walked into camp. Approaching us without the least diffidence, he tapped us familiarly on the chest and looked us up and down appraisingly, speaking an incomprehensible jargon. Kombua, he happened to be, a Vedda of Dambana, a score of miles away. He affected ignorance of Sinhalese, and maintained the farce all the time he was with us; but if we wanted evidence that he was imposter in this, we had it the next morning when our cook accidentally dropped an ember on him: "This devil wants to burn me," he said in excellent Sinhalese, taken off his guard. A picturesque fellow was old Kombua, spare, sparse-bearded and beady-eyed. From his gaping ear-holes dangled loosely doubled strings of white beads. In a small bundle knotted round his waist was his baggage, and let into his waist-string was a small axe. He was alertness itself as he guided us the following day. His deep-set eyes took in everything. The flick of a leaf would petrify him on the instant, often with foot uplifted like a startled retriever; the faintest hum and he would search aloft, for honey is food to the Vedda. 609 [191] 142 301 492

The glades teemed with nesting green-pigeons. From many a low bough we started a bird, to discover its clutch of white eggs showing through the meagre nest. I was manoeuvring to add a couple of imperial pigeons to our menu, when of a sudden there was a flutter at my elbow and a jungle hen floated away into the cover of the bordering scrub. I had but to turn my head to discover her mottled eggs in a charred stump. The twigs and creepers about the nest gave it just that air of negligence that was its sole concealment. I debated with my companion as to the freshness of our find. "Oh, they contain young ones right enough; just feel how heavy they are," he said taking an egg in his hand with an air of expertness that disguised a tender heart. I had no pretensions to such skill, but knowing that a jungle hen lays some six to a dozen eggs and seeing that here were only three, decided to rob them, and justifiably as it turned out when we enjoyed them with bacon the following morning. 000

Coming to a stream we heard, closer than we had ever done before, the melodious mocking of that elusive cuckoo, *cuculus micropterus*. I asked Kombua to show it to me. "He cannot be seen," was the confident assertion of a Sinhalese. The Vedda awaited a repetition of the note, then peered into the dense foliage of a tall tree and in a trice was pointing 136 825

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

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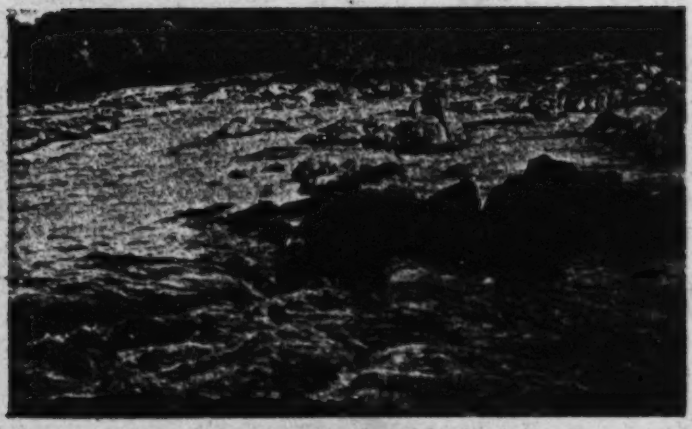

Dastoes falls. (Page 39)

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Sinna, a Vedda of Gunner's Quoin. (Page 42)

[Facing p. 39]

cries he had rushed in vain to the rescue. It speaks much for the dominance of man over animals that this puny fellow, armed only with a small hatchet, could live with impunity in such surroundings; and moreover leave his wife and children unprotected in their fragile leaf-hut while he was out in quest of food.

"Cha," I heard Sinna ruminating sorrowfully to himself, "the *goa*-catching dog is gone."

"Have you no other?" I asked.

"The one that's left isn't much good," he said. "With the bitch I lost I could catch six *goyas** a day."

The way to the caves was up the heavily-wooded, boulder-encumbered side of the hill, plentiful with caves of bear, porcupine and wild cat. On the sandy floor of one dark den were the footprints of a bear and her cubs that had just vacated it. Sinna was well ahead of us, as we clambered on trembling knees regardless of all else but where to gain foot-hold, when a timorous one called out to the Vedda from below, "There now, if a bear should come, don't you run away and climb a tree."

The little chap wagged his head acquiescingly. I asked him what he would do in such an event.

"We will also strike; he will also bite," was the cool reply.

Gaining a spur, at length we attained the first of the series of caves known as the Manweethiya. A strong aroma of bats greeted us. Ant-hills grew out of the dusty floor of the cave, the plastered dome of which was ornamented with frescoes of Buddhas and *devas*. A decayed wooden image stood behind a flat altar stone supported on bricks, many of which lay fallen about. A broken wall partially shut in the cave, and another divided it off from a deep pool of crystalline water.

From here a passage protected by a low wall led through a narrow gulley flanked by small trees; thence by way of spurs, tunnels and deep grottoes we came to a shallow cave in full face of the sky, where we were the cause of much concern to a pair of peregrine falcons. They hovered above us crying perturbedly; now they would swoop boldly down almost within reach of our hands; now wing away with harsh cackling cries of alarm, as they discovered us handling their eggs, that lay amidst the debris of brick and tile.

Ahead was a fearsome pass, which we must negotiate to reach the last of the caves. It was no more than a shallow, sloping notch in the sheer side of the rock, overlooking a drop of about three hundred feet, and with seemingly nothing beyond it but eternity. On hands and knees we crawled through and were mightily relieved to find ourselves in the security of a large grotto. Here, before two patched stone images, we found a few of our carriers devoutly kneeling; on an altar-stone were their meagre oblations of ixora blooms they had gathered on the way. The virtue, it would seem, lay less in the quality of the offerings than in the attainment of this inhospitable shrine with its weathered and lonely gods.

We could go no farther; but hence along the crazy edge of the hill was the merest semblance of a break-neck way that led, we were told, to the ancient kingdom of the *rakshayas* (demons) with its foot-wide

*Monitor lizard

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

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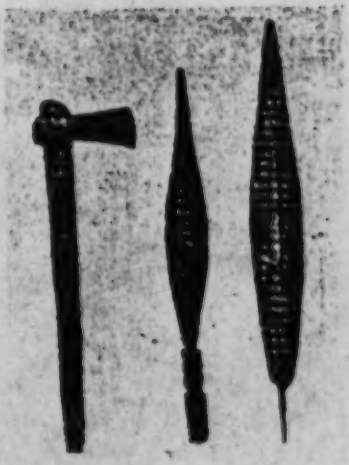
Strike-a-light and flint. (Page 74)



Vedda axe and sades

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Fire making by rubbing sticks. (Page 74)

[Facing p. 74]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920). 1965 AX5 Vedda AX5

Lastly, there is the *kangotawa* (deer-skin receptacle for the honey), or *yakka-katte* (devil's mouth) as it is reverently called out of deference to the tutelary demons of the rock, who might otherwise be angered and send the cutter to his doom.

A pile of firewood is now collected on top of the rock to protect the guardians of the ladder, while another heap is made by those below. All being ready they await the protecting darkness. When this comes the play begins. The great fire at the foot of the rock is lit and fed abundantly with green leaves; large volumes of smoke lick uncannily up the side of the hill towards the hives; now there is a stir among the bees. As the Veddas hear it their merriment waxes great: "*Bambaru, bambaru, bambaru*; *thapita, thapita, thapita. Ho bambaru thuapo**;" they cry. "*Giddi, giddi, giddi*; *rung, rung, rung*," they jeer in imitation of the flight.

Meanwhile the fire above has been lighted, and two smoking *kulas* have been lowered towards the hives. The air is heavy with the ominous hum of angry bees.

Now is the time for the descent. The ladder, firmly secured to a tree or stone, and guarded by the brother-in-law of the cutter (the only person ineligible to marry his wife in the event of accident), is let down with a propitiatory incantation† to the demons of the rock and ancestral spirits. This being uttered, the hand grip is said to be strong and the feet to cling like jak milk to the stone.

With smoking *kulas* looped to forearms and *matha* slung on shoulder, and hair dishevelled over his face that the bees may not get at his eyes and nose, the cutter, gripping the cane with a single hand, disappears over the edge of the cliff into the darkness and the smoke. The ladder creaks as he feels his way down, for he sees nothing.

He has reached the level of the hives. At a signal the deer-skin receptacle is lowered to him, and this he secures to the ladder. Thrusting a leg between two rungs so that his foot is on the lower and his bent knee against the upper, and his head between two others so that the back of his neck is braced against a rung, he is free to use his hands. First he smokes the hives with the *kulas* mounted on the *matha* and drives away the lingering bees. Then, slinging the *kulas* on his forearms, he takes up the stake and, with its pointed end, cuts horizontally through the lower part of the comb, separating off the useless *yotha* with its contained grubs which the bees stoutly defend. He next cuts the comb in vertical sections, and, loosening each from its attachment, spits it with the pronged end of the stake, removes it, and shakes it into the receptacle at his knee. Thus he deals with all the hives.

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* "The bees, the bees, the bees; pile the fire, pile the fire, pile the fire. Ho! the bees run."

† *Yethinawa* it is called; and thus it goes:—

Heibo, heibo, heibo.
Mi nindagang hetunko marlichu,
Ahi upang nawanthongta maihi helaney,
Maihi wal opahara thenawa hithen,
Hemathenen sanhoen opanagana hetunakagena.
Tho hadey yanna, tho hadey yanna, tho hadey yanna.